

EXETER-WEST GREENWICH September 28, 2010

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

MINUTES

The Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District School Committee held a meeting on this date at 6:00 p.m. in the Jr. – Sr. High School Library. Members present were Susan DeSack, Chairperson; Teri Maia-Cicero, Vice-Chairperson (arrived at 6:10 p.m.); Gregory Coutcher, Clerk; and Valerie Zuercher. Members Mark Rafanelli, Mary Walsh, and Robert Bollengier were absent. Superintendent Thomas J. Geismar and Director of Administration Robert V. Ross were present. Director of Special Services Carmella Farrar was absent.

ORDER – Chair DeSack called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all and Superintendent Geismar read the District Mission Statement.

Open Forum – Audience member/Sr. High School Improvement Team Member Beth Heaney said that she would like to have the opportunity to voice her opinion regarding the vote to change Senior Seminar from pass/fail to a letter grade. Chair DeSack explained that the committee planned to have this topic for discussion on the next meeting agenda because the full committee is not present tonight. This matter will be addressed on October 12. Chair DeSack said that in the meantime, she would assign Principal Butler with the task of

providing the School Committee with information outlining the concerns of both sides of the 50/50 split vote.

Presentation – None

ROUTINE ITEMS – CONSENT AGENDA- Superintendent Geismar gave an overview of the Consent Agenda.

Clerk Coutcher made a motion to accept the consent agenda. Member Zuercher seconded the motion. Voted 4 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.

The following items were approved:

A. Approval of Minutes - Regular Minutes of September 14, 2010

B. Personnel Items

1. Appointments

2. Leaves of Absence

3. Resignations

4. Grievances

5. Non-Renewals

6. Recalls

7. Sabbaticals

C. Bills – In the amount of \$350,539.11

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D. Home School Approvals

End Consent Agenda

Correspondence – (1) September 22, 2010 Memorandum from Superintendent Geismar to the School Committee Regarding Grant Application

NEW BUSINESS – National FFA Field Trip Approval – Member Zuercher made a motion to approve the National FFA Field Trip. Clerk Coutcher seconded the motion. Voted 4 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.

NECAP Science Results Report – Chair DeSack said that the NECAP results were enclosed in members' packets to review and digest. Dr. Geismar advised that a NECAP Science results analysis and plan would be brought to the next regular meeting. Vice Chair Cicero said that she would like to remind everyone that NECAP is three-quarters earth science. The district does not teach earth science. She voiced her opinion that she does not want to see EWG's curriculum change just to please NECAP science testing when it is in the wrong direction. Chair DeSack said that NECAP results are public and need to be on the next meeting agenda for analysis.

Approve .75 FTE – 7th Grade Class Size Relief/Transition Plan – Dr. Geismar introduced Principal Smith who is here this evening to

explain conditions in the seventh grade that need to be addressed. He said that Principal Smith and the faculty have developed a plan that they believe needs to be implemented. Principal Smith reported there is a twofold problem for the seventh grade team. First, there are a large number of students enrolled. Second, there are a large number of retained students. Principal Smith said that she has been working with the seventh grade team to resolve this issue. A transition program for retained students has been developed to provide them with a different experience this year and to provide additional support to help students make academic gains. The students will be assisted with study skills and homework, which will be taught in resource classes. The school social worker and behavior specialist will work with students on social skills and goal setting. The school social worker and behavior specialist will also work with staff on incentive plans in an attempt to reengage some students. The plan is to add a section of math, science, and social studies for these students and provide daily support. Core classes will be separate however; these students will not be excluded. Principal Smith said that feedback from parents has been positive. Dr. Geismar added that this same problem affects schools all over the country. The district recognizes the issue. Principal Smith and her staff have put a lot of effort into this plan. This is the district's last best chance to reengage these students and to get families involved. Dr. Geismar said that he hopes that the School Committee will approve this request. Dr. Geismar advised that the .75 FTE would probably not need to continue next school year.

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Vice Chair Cicero made a motion to approve the .75 FTE for the 7th grade class size relief/transition plan. Member Zuercher seconded the motion. Voted 4 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.

Approve .4 FTE School Nurse Teacher – Dr. Geismar reminded members that last year the .5 FTE School Nurse Teacher position was cut. Dr. Geismar recommended restoring the position at .4 FTE to provide coverage at Lineham School in the morning.

Member Zuercher made a motion to approve a .4FTE School Nurse Teacher. Clerk Coutcher seconded the motion.

Dr. Geismar advised that funding for this position would come from the Federal Jobs Fund. He said that it is uncertain exactly when those funds will come; however, the Federal Jobs Fund will be funded. Even if it is not, the district could manage funding the FTEs. Dr. Geismar stressed the need for restoring the position to assist with health issues at Lineham School. He said that he would not put forward this recommendation if he thought it could not be managed.

Vote 4 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.

EWG Sports 4 Kids Track Building Committee Disbandment – Chair DeSack voiced her opinion that this item should continue until all School Committee members are present. She advised that some members who are not present tonight sit on the Track Building Committee. Consensus of the committee was to continue this item to the next regular meeting agenda for discussion.

Right Choice Physical Therapy/First Responders at Football Games – Update – Dr. Geismar reported that he contacted Right Choice Physical Therapy and they are continuing to work with EWG athletes. Mr. Tourgee helped to put a schedule in place to have EMS at home football games. Foundry Sports Medicine and Fitness have been told that its services are no longer needed. The district donated \$100 to EMS. The visiting team brought a certified trainer with them to the game on Saturday.

Concession Stand/Storage Building – Update – Director of Administration Robert Ross reported that although the equipment stored in the concession stand has not been moved to the storage shed yet, Director of Maintenance Bill Plumley has coordinated with Boosters to move items on Saturday. In the meantime, Mr. Plumley has started moving some items. Mr. Ross said he waiting for quotes from vendors regarding the electrical project for the new storage shed. Chair DeSack voiced her opinion that it should not take

two-weeks to empty a building. Dr. Geismar assured members that the concession stand would be cleaned out before the next game. Chair DeSack pointed out that folks will still need time to clean and disinfect the building as well.

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UNFINISHED BUSINESS – Washington County Regional Planning Council Energy Program Participation Agreement Approval – Chair DeSack advised that the committee needs to authorize the superintendent to sign the WCRPC Participation Agreement. Vice Chair Cicero raised the point that not all members are present tonight. Chair DeSack said that all members received the document at the last meeting, all had time to review the document, and no one has raised issue concerning the document. Chair DeSack put forth her recommendation to move to sign the agreement.

Clerk Coutcher made a motion to authorize the Superintendent to sign the Washington County Regional Planning Council Energy Program Participation Agreement. Member Zuercher seconded the motion. Voted 4 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.

Family Services – Mental Health Support – Continued – Member Zuercher confirmed that she is satisfied that the concerns she raised at the last meeting concerning Family Services have been addressed.

Sr. Project Steering Committee/High School Diploma System Update
– Chair DeSack advised that this item would continue to the next regular meeting agenda for the entire School Committee to discuss and hear concerns surrounding the vote to change Senior Seminar from pass/fail to a grade. Chair DeSack asked that Superintendent Geismar and Principal Butler make sure that committee members receive information prior to the next meeting, including a write-up, outlining the concerns of both sides of the 50/50 split vote. Member Zuercher requested that the write-up include the number of members sitting on the Steering Committee and how they voted. Chair DeSack said that names would need to be excluded. Member Zuercher agreed but asked for clarification whether votes were from a teacher or a parent. Chair DeSack asked that the committee receive this information next week to allow ample time to process. Chair DeSack said that members could email any questions they may have however, to copy the email to all so that all members can see if there are questions. Chair DeSack assured audience members that there would be an opportunity for them to be recognized to speak at the next meeting.

Capital Project Update – Dr. Geismar said there have been several conversations with the Department of Health (DOH) and the engineer regarding Metcalf's water system plans. He said that he thinks the DOH has been asking reasonable questions and the engineer has been giving reasonable answers. Dr. Geismar said he expects an

answer from DOH shortly. In the meantime, the temporary water system is being utilized. As soon as plans are approved, the tank will be ordered. Chair DeSack added that she recently met with the Superintendent to determine why it is taking so long for the DOH to approve the plans. There has been a combination of concerns such as the water pressure, usage amounts, tank size, and engineer's drawings. It appears now that the District should hear shortly. Dr. Geismar said that the Building Committee meets tomorrow for

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an update on the progress of the project. The contactor and the committee will discuss credits and changeovers.

Reports/Comments – None

Important Dates and Meetings –Tuesday, October 12, 2010-School Committee Meeting; Tuesday, October 26, 2010-School Committee Meeting

EXECUTIVE SESSION – RIGL 42-46-4 and RIGL 42-46-5 – None

Adjournment – Vice Chair Cicero moved to adjourn. Clerk Coutcher seconded the motion. Voted 4 – 0 in favor. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 6:44 p.m.

ROBIN CERIO
CLERK